

In 1962, he was selected for a 5-year tour of active duty with the General Staff at the Pentagon, where he became Chief of the Army Intelligence Reserve Office. And as the United States engaged in another military conflict in Vietnam, he again heeded the call to service in 1967. After his tour, he was a military intelligence research analyst at the U.S. Army Institute of Land Combat. In 1970, Col. Lenard retired after 30 years of distinguished military service.

Col. Lenard gained numerous recognitions and awards during his extensive military career including: the Silver Star Medal with Cluster, the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Bronze Star Medal with "V" for Valor, the French Croix de Guerre with Palm, seven overseas campaign ribbons (Algeria-French Morocco, Tunisia, Sicily, Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes-Alsace and Rhineland) and numerous other, citations, the last being the Normandy Medal of the Jubilee of Liberty.

Upon retirement from the military, he became the first executive director of the Polish-American Congress, Washington D.C. Office. After leaving that office in 1974, he became Project Manager of the U.S. Bicentennial Ethnic Racial Council. He organized nationwide conferences and coordinated local and national U.S. Bicentennial activities, providing many opportunities for Polonia participation.

Together, with his wife Myra, Col. Lenard worked on many initiatives to support Polish independence, as the country once again suffered under the pervasive influence of its Soviet neighbor. He administered millions of dollars in grants at The National Endowment for Democracy through the Polish American Congress Charitable Foundation to support the budding Polish underground: Solidarity. He helped provide to Citizens' Committees with urgently needed technical resources and finances. Col. and Mrs. Lenard lead the march toward supporting Poland's membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Col. Lenard served on the Board of Directors of the American Red Cross. Moreover, Col. Lenard was well-known for his advocacy of close relations between Poles and Jews, the two groups that suffered the most under German-Nazi rule.

For his work with the Polish-American Community, the Polish-American Congress and the bitterness of Poland's position in the world, Colonel Lenard and his wife Myra, either jointly or as individuals, received many awards. These included the following: the Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland with Star, Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland, Polish Cavalry saber with inscription "For Your Freedom and Ours From The Grateful Nation of Poland," the Polish-National Alliance's "Gold Cross Legion of Honor," the Polish Apostolate "Pride of Polish American Community Award, the Founders Award and the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland.

Myra Lenard passed from this life on May 1, 2000, later to be joined with her husband. They are survived by their three children: George, Antoinette and Elizabeth as well as their grandson Jeffrey Lenard.

The Polish-American Congress Medal of Freedom was awarded to Col. Lenard on December 7, 2007. Since he was unable to obtain his award and the gratitude of Polish-

Americans in person, it is a fitting to conclude this record of a remarkable man with the acceptance speech he wrote, but could not make upon receipt of this honor:

Merry Christmas to all of my dear friends. This is the first time in many years that I will not be able to share with you the wonderful holiday celebration we all look forward to that is sponsored by the Washington office of the Polish-American Congress.

Nonetheless, I am with you in spirit. I cherish the memories of our long association together, our common struggles in favor of a free and democratic Poland and in favor of Polish-American culture and the values that we all share."

TRIBUTE TO U.S. AIR FORCE
STAFF SERGEANT ALEJANDRO
AYALA

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a hero from my congressional district, U.S. Air Force SSgt Alejandro Ayala. Today, I ask that the House of Representatives honor and remember this incredible young man who died in service to his country.

Alejandro had a lifelong fascination with the military. He attended Arlington High School in Riverside, CA, and joined the Reserve Officers' Training Corps. Immediately after his graduation in 1999, Alejandro joined the United States Air Force. Alejandro Ayala attended basic training at Lackland Air Force Base and then was assigned to Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina, where he met his wife Megan, whom he married in 2003. Alejandro was subsequently assigned to the 90th Logistics Readiness Squadron at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming. On Sunday, November 18, 2007, Alejandro died of injuries he received from a vehicle accident in Kuwait while serving with forces fighting in Iraq. He was 26 years old.

In reading about Alejandro's life, I was impressed by his devotion to family and the military. Alejandro's brother Cesar describes Alejandro as his inspiration for joining the U.S. Marine Corps. Alejandro is survived by his wife Megan; two young children, Alexandra and Matthew; parents Faustino and Ilda; twin sister Liset; sister Angelica; and brothers, Cesar and Francisco.

As we look at the incredibly rich military history of our country we realize that this history is comprised of men, just like Alejandro, who bravely fought for the ideals of freedom and democracy. Each story is unique and humbling for those of us who, far from the dangers they have faced, live our lives in relative comfort and ease. The day the Ayala family had to lay Alejandro to rest was probably the most difficult moment the family has ever faced and my thoughts, prayers and deepest gratitude for their sacrifice go out to them. There are no words that can relieve their pain and what words I offer only begin to convey my deep respect and highest appreciation.

Staff Sergeant Ayala's wife, children, mother, father, sisters, brothers and all his relatives have given a part of themselves in the loss of their loved one. I hope they know that the goodness Alejandro brought to the world and

the sacrifice he has made will always be remembered.

TRIBUTE TO 75TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE SANDHILLS STOCK SHOW
AND RODEO

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. CONAWAY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the SandHills Stock Show and Rodeo on its 75th anniversary. Since 1932, the SandHills Rodeo has had an invaluable impact on the economy and heritage of West Texas.

From its beginnings as the first "Pure Hereford" Show in Texas in 1932 to the present-day exposition—including the horse show, stock show, and rodeo—the SandHills Rodeo has generated millions of dollars in revenue for the Permian Basin and has attracted thousands of visitors from across the country. Like the City of Odessa itself, the SandHills Stock Show and Rodeo has grown and flourished over the past 75 years and has become as much a part of Texas as the cowboys themselves.

Growing up in Odessa, I attended the rodeo and marveled at the brave cowboys on their bucking broncos and the fine animals that compete in the Stock and Horse shows. From the crowning of Miss SandHills Rodeo to the always exciting (at least for the parents) Boot Scramble, the rodeo has something for everyone. I am pleased that West Texans of all generations continue to enjoy this unique and exciting event. Congratulations to all of those who have made the SandHills Stock Show and Rodeo such a fine Texas tradition!

TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF
STAFF SERGEANT. SHANE BECKER

HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of SSG Shane Becker.

Mr. Becker served in the United States Army as a staff Sergeant. in the 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

Mr. Becker courageously died in combat on April 3, 2007, in Baghdad. I believe his service and commitment to our country most worthy of being recognized by this great legislative body.

Shane Becker was born October 12, 1971, and graduated from Greeley West High School in 1990. Becker joined the Army in 1993 and was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. In 2006, Becker transferred from Fort Hood to Fort Richardson in Alaska.

Mr. Becker was a decorated war hero who received the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, the Joint Meritorious Unit Award, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, and the Overseas Service Medal.